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## **Groups Applaud Wolverine Coal Plant Permit Denial by Governor Granholm, Michigan Department of Natural Resources and the Environment**

### ***Governor Follows Through on Commitments to Clean Energy Jobs***

Local residents and groups declared victory today in an almost three-year battle against a proposed coal plant in Rogers City. Area residents applauded Governor Jennifer Granholm and the Department of Natural Resources and the Environment (DNRE) Director Rebecca Humphries for denying a permit needed to build the controversial plant.

“We in Rogers City are profoundly grateful for this decision,” said Jean Veselenak, a resident of Rogers City. “The cost of Wolverine coal would have meant diminished health, diminished economy, and great injury to our environment which sustains our lives. Wolverine must now put its head to the real thing; wind, solar; and new technology that already exists in Michigan. Our families deserve these jobs and their health after long promises.”

The DNRE decision states there is no need for the proposed power plant, and that alternative methods are available that would supply the customers of the four electric cooperatives that make up Wolverine with electricity at a much cheaper rate than the cost of building a new coal plant. State officials estimated that the proposed plant would increase the electric rates charged by the cooperatives by at least 59.2% even after Wolverine suggested reducing the plant by half.

“With this decision, Governor Granholm reinforced Michigan’s clean energy jobs future by moving away from coal and supporting today’s job creators—renewable energy and energy efficiency,” said Anne Woiwode, State Director of Sierra Club of Michigan. “Coal is an outdated, dirty and dangerous way to generate power and it is a dead end for Michigan jobs.”

“Today, the State of Michigan echoed what we’ve been saying for years: we don’t need to waste millions on dirty, unnecessary coal plants,” said Faith Bugel, Senior Attorney for the Environmental Law & Policy Center. “This is the right decision for Michigan’s ratepayers, for Michigan’s workers and Michigan’s environment.”

Today’s decision arose out of an Executive Order from Granholm last year that instructed the DNRE, with input from the staff of the Michigan Public Service Commission, to evaluate Michigan’s energy needs and the availability of alternatives to coal plants. The guidance arose from provisions in the federal Clean Air Act adopted in the 1970s, which allow states to require consideration of alternatives in weighing whether to issue or deny an air pollution permit. The Michigan Environmental Protection Act, which calls for consideration of alternatives to activities that pollute, impair or destroy the environment, was also cited during public comment as rationale for the state to deny the Wolverine permit, as well as other coal plant air permits also under consideration.

“The denial of this permit clears the way for Wolverine to invest in energy efficiency and electric generation sources that will serve their member cooperatives better by developing cleaner electricity generation and keeping costs lower,” said Susan Harley, Policy Director for Clean Water Action. “We applaud Governor Granholm and Director Humphries for making decisions that will serve Michigan well today and for generations to come.”

*DNRE's documents explaining the denial of the Wolverine Power Supply Cooperative air permit to install can be found here: <http://www.deq.state.mi.us/aps/cwerp.shtml#WPSC>.*